

IN THE CLAIMS

Please amend the claims as follows:

1. (Currently Amended) An image processor for processing a video signal,  
~~characterized in~~ comprising:

aspect ratio information acquisition means for acquiring aspect ratio information  
about an original video signal;

aspect ratio conversion means for carrying out a process of aspect ratio conversion on  
the original video signal based on the acquired aspect ratio information ~~in such a manner that~~  
~~the to generate a processed video signal representing an image of the original video signal~~  
having a roundness of an image of the original video signal becomes 1;

background signal generation means for generating a background video signal serving  
as a background of the processed video signal ~~that is the main image;~~ and

video signal combination means for executing a process of combining the processed  
video signal and ~~[[a]] the background video signal, which both have~~ having been subjected to  
aspect ratio conversion, to generate a synthesized video signal,

wherein the aspect ratio information acquisition means acquires the aspect ratio  
information based on identification information that has been added to the original video  
signal.

2. (Canceled)

3. (Currently Amended) The image processor according to claim 1, ~~characterized in~~  
~~that~~ wherein

the aspect ratio conversion means has an operation mode in which the aspect ratio of  
the original video signal is changed automatically based on information about the ~~input~~

original video signal, and an operation mode in which the aspect ratio of the original video signal is changed using a fixed scaling factor determined without referring to ~~an input~~ the original video signal.

4. (Currently Amended) The image processor according to claim 1, ~~characterized in that~~ wherein

the aspect ratio conversion means changes the aspect ratio of the original video signal by pixel number conversion.

5. (Currently Amended) The image processor according to claim 1, ~~characterized in that~~ wherein

the aspect ratio conversion means changes the aspect ratio of the original video signal in such a manner that the ~~input~~ image has roundness of 1, and has the maximum size fitting in ~~[[the]]~~ a selected screen.

6. (Currently Amended) The image processor according to claim 1, ~~characterized in that~~ wherein

the background signal generation means performs signal generation using ~~[[the]]~~ a same signal format as that of the processed video signal generated by the aspect ratio conversion means, the generated background comprising images derived ~~[[by]]~~ from at least one of a program filling in a rectangular region, images created in the bitmap format, ~~[[or]]~~ and the JPEG (Joint Picture Experts Group) format, ~~or a combination of these.~~

7. (Currently Amended) The image processor according to claim 1, ~~characterized in that wherein~~

the video signal combination means determines ~~[[the]]~~ a size of the video signal.

8. (Currently Amended) The image processor according to claim 1, ~~characterized in~~ further comprising:

recording means for recording the synthesized video signal ~~created by combination of images~~ onto a removable recording medium.

9. (Currently Amended) The image processor according to claim 8, ~~characterized in that wherein~~

the aspect ratio conversion means carries out aspect ratio conversion with respect to the original video signal in such a manner that the image recorded by an external device with ~~[[a]]~~ the removable recording media medium loaded therein has roundness of 1 and has the maximum size fitting in ~~[[the]]~~ a particular screen reproducing the synthesized video signal.

10. (Currently Amended) The image processor according to claim 8, ~~characterized in that wherein~~

the background signal generation means generates a background signal of a same size ~~the same~~ as ~~[[the]]~~ a screen that is selected for reproducing the synthesized video signal recorded on the removable recording medium in the external device, or a size needed for combination of video images.

11. (Currently Amended) The image processor according to claim 8, ~~characterized in that wherein~~

when the image after conversion by the aspect ratio conversion means has ~~[[the]]~~ an aspect ratio different from ~~[[the]]~~ a preset aspect ratio at the time of recording, the video signal combination means adds the background video signal around the processed video signal ~~that is regarded as main~~ to generate an image of ~~any desired~~ the preset aspect ratio ~~to matching the two.~~

12. (Currently Amended) An image processing method for processing a video signal, ~~characterized in comprising:~~

an aspect ratio information acquisition step of acquiring aspect ratio information about an original video signal;

an aspect ratio conversion step of carrying out a process of aspect ratio conversion on the original video signal based on the acquired aspect ratio information ~~in such a manner that the to generate a processed signal representing an image of the original video signal having a roundness of the image of the original video signal becomes 1;~~

a background signal generation step of generating a background video signal serving as a background of the processed video signal ~~that is the main signal;~~ and

a video signal combination step of combining the processed video signal and ~~[[a]]~~ the background video signal, ~~which both have~~ having been subjected to aspect ratio conversion, to generate a synthesized video signal.

wherein the aspect ratio conversion step includes acquiring the aspect ratio information based on identification information that has been added to the original video signal.

13. (Currently Amended) The image processing method according to claim 12,  
~~characterized in~~ further comprising

a recording step of recording the synthesized video signal resulting from the signal combination onto a removable recording medium.

14. (Currently Amended) The image processing method according to claim 13,  
~~characterized in that~~ wherein

the aspect ratio conversion step carries out the process of aspect ratio conversion with respect to the original video signal in such a manner that the image recorded in the ~~media~~ removable medium in ~~[[the]]~~ an external device has an roundness of 1 and has the maximum size fitting in ~~[[the]]~~ a particular screen reproducing the synthesized video signal.

15. (Currently Amended) The image processing method according to claim 13,  
~~characterized in that~~ wherein

the background signal generation step generates a background signal of a same size ~~the same~~ as the particular screen generating the synthesized video signal recorded on ~~[[a]]~~ the removable recording medium in ~~[[an]]~~ the external device, or a size needed for video image combination.

16. (Currently Amended) The image processing method according to claim 13,  
~~characterized in that,~~ wherein

in the video signal combination step, when at the time of recording the image after conversion has an aspect ratio different from ~~[[the]]~~ a preset aspect ratio, the background video signal is added around the processed video signal ~~that is the main image~~ to generate an image of the preset aspect ratio.

17. (Currently Amended) A computer program ~~written in~~ embedded on a computer-readable ~~format~~ medium, the computer program configured to execute, on a computer system, a process of processing a video signal, ~~characterized in~~ comprising:

an aspect ratio information acquisition step of acquiring aspect ratio information about an original video signal;

an aspect ratio conversion step of carrying out a process of aspect ratio conversion on the original video signal based on the acquired aspect ratio information ~~in such a manner that the to generate a processed video signal representing an image of the original video signal having a roundness of the image of the original video signal becomes 1;~~

a background signal generation step of generating a background video signal serving as a background of the processed video signal ~~that is the main image;~~ and

a video signal combination step of combining the processed video signal and the background video signal, ~~which both have~~ having been subjected to aspect ratio conversion, to generate a synthesized video signal.

wherein the aspect ratio conversion step includes acquiring the aspect ratio information based on identification information that has been added to the original video signal.

18. (New) The image processing method of claim 12, wherein the identification information is a two-bit code.